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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/919,024	07/31/2001	Harunori Hirao	4296-144	3715

7590 04/09/2003
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EXAMINER

OH, TAYLOR V

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1625	

DATE MAILED: 04/09/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/919,024

Applicant(s)

HIRAO ET AL.

Examiner

Taylor Victor Oh

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 December 2002.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) Other:

Final Rejection

The Status of Claims

Claims 1-4 have been rejected.

Claim Rejections-35 USC 112

1. Applicants' argument filed 12/23/2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The rejection of Claims 1, 2 ,and 4 has been maintained due to applicants' failure to modify in the amendment.

Claim Rejections-35 USC 102

Rejection of Claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated clearly by Takada et al (U.S. 4,203,906).

The rejection of Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated clearly by Takada et al (U.S. 4,203,906)) is maintained for reasons of the record in paper no. 4.

Response to Argument

2. The applicants argue the following issue:
 1. Takada et al does not disclose any step of causing raw material and molecular oxygen- containing gas to pass a range in which the concentration of the raw material is less than that of the lower explosion limit of the raw material and the concentration of oxygen is not less than the limiting oxygen concentration ;
 2. there is no teaching in Takada of controlling conditions of a raw material and a molecular oxygen-containing gas in the start-up of a reactor and the advantages associated therewith .

The applicants' argument have been noted, but these arguments are not persuasive.

First, with regard to the first and second arguments, the Examiner has noted applicants' argument. However, the Takada et al reference does mention that a catalytic vapor phase oxidation process is generally exothermic and it is important to control the reaction temperature within a certain range (see col .1 ,lines 16-20) in order to avoid undesired combustion reactions (see col. 1 ,lines 35-37). Furthermore, In example 5, the reference does teach that a reaction gas composition of 7.0 % by volume of propylene, 12.6 % by volume of oxygen , 10 % by volume of steam and balance of inert

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gas containing nitrogen gas is supplied to the catalyst stage (see col. 10 ,lines 17-21).

From the aboves, it becomes evident that the Takada et al process does imply the importance of the explosion limit of both raw and oxygen materials. Also, there is definitely a teaching in the Takada process of controlling conditions of the raw material and the molecular oxygen-containing gas in the start-up of the reactor.

Therefore, they read on the claimed invention.

Therefore, all the rejections are maintained.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

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extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Taylor Victor Oh whose telephone number is 703-305-0809. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alan Rotman can be reached on 703-308-4698. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-2742 for regular communications and 703-305-7401 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1235.



April 6, 2003


ALAN L. ROTMAN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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